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"THESE UNIVERSAL IDEAS THAT WE STUDY"

In *The Mahatma Letters* we read:

"Plato was right: *ideas* rule the world; and, as men's minds will receive *new* ideas, laying aside the old and effete, the world will advance: mighty revolutions will spring from them; creeds and even powers will crumble before their onward march crushed by the irresistible force. It will be just as impossible to resist their influx, when the time comes, as to stay the progress of the tide.

"But all this will come gradually on, and before it comes we have a duty set before us; that of sweeping away as much as possible the dross left to us by our pious forefathers. New ideas have to be planted on clean places, for these ideas touch upon the most momentous subjects. It is not physical phenomena but these universal ideas that we study, as to comprehend the former, we have to first understand the latter. They touch man's true position in the universe, in relation to his previous and future births; his origin and ultimate destiny; the relation of the mortal to the immortal; of the temporary to the eternal; of the finite to the infinite; ideas larger, grander, more comprehensive, recognizing the universal reign of Immutable Law, unchanging and unchangeable in regard to which there is only an ETERNAL NOW, while to uninitiated mortals time is past or future as related to their finite existence on this material speck of dirt. This is what we study and what many have solved.

"And now it is your province to decide which will you will have: the highest philosophy or simple exhibitions of occult powers . . ."

"We have a duty set before us," declares one speaking for those whose task was and is far greater than we can fully comprehend, but some knowledge of which we have gained if we understand the background reason for the founding of The Theosophical Society.

To be a sharer in the propagation of those "new ideas" which "touch upon the most momentous subjects"; to be associated, even distantly, with that great effort, so needed, so formidable and globally embracing, is to recognize opportunity of the noblest kind. All who will and who dare can be sharers in this truest way of serving humanity.

And the Teacher K. H. continues, following on

the extract already quoted:

"The *Chiefs* want a 'Brotherhood of Humanity,' a real Universal Fraternity started; an institution which would make itself known throughout the world and arrest the attention of the highest minds . . ." —(p. 24)

— W.E.S.

WHAT REAL THEOSOPHY IS

H. P. Blavatsky

The following are excerpts from an article "Is Theosophy a Religion?" by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, published in *Lucifer*, November 15, 1888 (see also *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, X). As sole editor of *Lucifer*, and from a background of 13 years' experience in the stormy life of the Theosophical Society, HPB could now in this periodical speak out unhindered. Those students who were 'ready' and 'awake' recognized in her what she was: the Bringer to the new Cycle then dawning of a new outpouring of the ever-old Wisdom-Religion. — ED.

. . . Theosophy is not a Religion, we say, but RELIGION itself, the one bond of unity, which is so universal and all-embracing that no man, as no speck — from gods and mortals down to animals, the blade of grass and atom — can be outside of its light. Therefore, any organization or body of that name must necessarily be a UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD:

Were it otherwise, Theosophy would be but a word added to hundreds of other such words, as high sounding as they are pretentious and empty. Viewed as a philosophy, Theosophy in its practical work is the alembic of the medieval alchemist. It transmutes the apparently base metal of every ritualistic and dogmatic creed (Christianity included) into the gold of fact and truth, and thus truly produces a universal panacea for the ills of mankind . . .

Its [Theosophy's] doctrines, if seriously studied, call forth, by stimulating one's reasoning powers and awakening the *inner* in the animal man, every hitherto dormant power for good in us, and also the perception of the true and the real, as opposed to the false and the unreal. Tearing off with no uncertain hand the thick veil of dead-letter with which every old religious scripture was cloaked, scientific Theosophy . . . reveals to the scoffer at old wisdom the origin of the world's faiths and sciences. It opens

new vistas beyond the old horizons of crystallized, motionless, and despotic faiths; and turning blind belief into a reasoned knowledge founded on mathematical laws — the only *exact* science — it demonstrates to him under profounder and more philosophical aspects the existence of that which, repelled by the grossness of its dead-letter form, he had long since abandoned as a nursery tale. It gives a clear and well-defined object, an ideal to live for, to every sincere man or woman belonging to whatever station in society and of whatever culture and degree of intellect. Practical Theosophy is not *one* Science, but embraces every science in life, moral and physical. It may, in short, be justly regarded as the universal 'coach', a tutor of world-wide knowledge and experience, and of an erudition which not only assists and guides his pupils towards a successful examination for every scientific or moral service in earthly life, but fits them for *the lives* to come, if those pupils will only study the universe and its mysteries *within themselves*, instead of studying them through the spectacles of orthodox science and religions

The just published *Secret Doctrine* will show what were the ideas of all antiquity with regard to the *primeval instructors* of primitive man and his three earlier races. The genesis of that WISDOM-RELIGION, in which all Theosophists believe, dates from that period. So-called 'Occultism,' or rather Esoteric Science, has to be traced in its origin to those Beings who, led by Karma, have incarnated in our Humanity, and thus struck the keynote of that secret Science which countless generations of subsequent adepts have expanded since then in every age, while they checked its doctrines by personal observation and experience. The bulk of this knowledge — which no man is able to possess in its fullness — constitutes that which we now call Theosophy or 'divine knowledge.' Beings from other and higher worlds may have it entire; we can have it only approximately.

Thus, unity of everything in the universe implies and justifies our belief in the existence of a knowledge at once scientific, philosophical and religious, showing the necessity and actuality of the connection of man and all things in the universe with each other; which knowledge, therefore, becomes essentially RELIGION, and must be called in its integrity and universality by the distinctive name of WISDOM-RELIGION.

It is from this WISDOM-RELIGION that all the various individual 'Religions' (erroneously so called) have sprung, forming in their turn offshoots and branches, and also all the minor creeds, based upon and always originated through some personal experience in psychology. Every such religion, or religious offshoot, be it considered orthodox or heretical, wise or foolish, started originally as a clear and

unadulterated stream from the Mother-Source. The fact that each became in time polluted with purely human speculations and even inventions, due to interested motives, does not prevent any from having been pure in its early beginnings. There are those creeds — we shall not call them religions — which have now been overlaid with the human element out of all recognition; others just showing signs of early decay; not one that escaped the hand of time. But each and all are of divine, because natural and true, origin; aye — Mazdaism, Brahmanism, Buddhism as much as Christianity

And now we have shown, it is hoped, what real Theosophy is

THE FIRE OF SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

Following is an extract from the lead article under the above title in *Hermes*, November 1984, (Universal Theosophy Fellowship, Inc., Santa Barbara, California).

The seven states of consciousness and planes of matter in the cosmos are inseparable from the seven principles in man. It is through these principles that the self-conscious task of connecting together all the aspects of manifestation must be carried out, not on behalf of any narrow sense of self, but out of a sense of being the Self of all. The process of realizing the One is the same as that of understanding and mastering the operation of the reality principle in the constitution of Man. Through the Manasic fire of self-consciousness, human beings may realize the perfect unity and correspondence of the Self and the All, fusing together *Atma Vidya* and *Brahma Vidya*. The very capacity to preserve, purify and perfect the sense of selfhood is the gift of the highest *arupa* Pitris who endowed humanity with *Manas* over eighteen million years ago.

That class of the 'Fire Dhyanis', which we identify on undeniable grounds with the Agnishwattas, is called in our school the 'Heart' of the Dhyani-Chohan Body; and it is said to have incarnated in the third race of men and made them perfect. The esoteric Mystagogy speaks of the mysterious relation existing between the hebdomadic essence or substance of this angelic Heart and that of man, whose every physical organ, and psychic, and spiritual function, is a reflection, so to say, a copy on the terrestrial plane of the model or prototype *above*.

— *The Secret Doctrine*, 91-92

To learn to live from above below, seeing all life from the standpoint of primordial and unbroken unity, is to awaken the power of noetic action. One must overcome the fragmentary sense of psychic selfhood through a ceaseless application of the Heart Doctrine, a continual sifting of experience through meditation and self-correction,

continually cleaving to an intuition of the divine Presence within. Maintaining a sense of hope and possibility inspired by the paradigm of the Sage, individuals can learn to make a conscious and deliberate change, over a period of time, in their root conception of selfhood and so in their conceptions of time, causality and energy. As they do this, they will withdraw allegiance — and a sense of reality — from an entire class of perceptions and impressions. Then, after a period of transition, they will be able to endow a much higher class of perceptions with reality. This is both difficult and elusive. To change one's sphere of perception is not like changing one's clothes. That is why monasticism has failed over the last several thousand years and is no longer a viable option. Simply changing external circumstances helps in no way to bring about a fundamental breakthrough in thinking. At this point in human civilization, it is necessary to gain a good grasp of the metaphysics that is relevant to making true *metanoia* possible in human life and consciousness. Then, if one is so blest as to come into a sacred relationship as a disciple to a true Guru, one will be able to take full advantage of it so as to effect a radical and irreversible change in consciousness for the benefit of all beings..

COMETS AND METEORS

G. de Purucker

Because of world-wide interest in the approach of Halley's comet (nearest to the sun around February 9, 1986), the following extracts may be of general interest. They are quoted from G. de Purucker's *Studies in Occult Philosophy* under the Section "Transactions of the Headquarters Lodge." The student's presentation of the topic for the evening's study (Letter XXIII-B, especially pp. 161-2, of *The Mahatma Letters*) was followed by general discussion, after which G. de P. spoke as follows:

I would never state that meteorites are fragments of disintegrated comets, nor indeed that they are cometary material at all. When you reflect that comets or cometary material are but one stage or degree less ethereal than is a nebula, you will realize that the fundamental idea here is wrong. It is perfectly true, however, that comets gather unto themselves in their peregrinations through cosmic and solar space, the waste-material of the universe. They accrete these to themselves by attraction, and often lose them because when they pass by a sun, the solar attraction for such material things is heavy, much stronger than the very weak attraction that the comets exercise.

Reflect that any comet, even the largest known comets, are composed of material so exceedingly fine, so ethereal, that Halley's comet, for instance, one of the largest ever known perhaps, could be packed in a

hand-bag and the hand-bag would not be filled; and yet some of these comets stretch for millions and millions and millions of miles, if you include the head and the tail.

Returning to meteorites: what then are these bodies? They are the waste-material, the ejecta, of former suns; and hereby hangs another wonderful tale which would take me several hours even to sketch if it were only to make that statement fully comprehensible. Perhaps I should remark that while a sun in its life-time is extremely ethereal, at its heart even spiritual, as it approaches its end, it becomes much more concrete, thick, heavy, dense, and as we Theosophists say, material, until, just before the last flicker of solar life passes out, and the sun dies or becomes extinct, all that remains is a relatively heavy body. Then with the last flicker of the solar life it passes like a shadow over a sunlighted wall, and the living center is dead: "The Sun is dead. Long live the Sun!" At death it leaves behind a body which immediately bursts into innumerable fragments, some atomic and some much larger; and these ejecta are scattered through solar and stellar space to be swept up in later aeons not only by the reïmbodiment of the sun which has just died, but by other suns, and even other planets, as well as occasionally by comets. These meteorites contain many materials found also in our earth: iron, nickel, traces of copper, carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, and what not.

You will remember that H. P. B. has a passage not only in her beautiful *Voice of the Silence*, but in one of her wonderful articles, stating that every planet was once a glorious sun which became a planet in due course of time; and that before it dies this planet once a sun will become a sun again. You have a key here to a wonderful teaching. I wish I could say more about this, but I have neither the time nor is this the place — except indeed to add that every planetary nebula becoming a planetary comet passes through a sun-phase before becoming sufficiently materialized to be a planet or planetary chain. In other words I mean to say that every planet is for a time a small sun when, just before leaving the cometary stage, it passes through a temporary sun-phase before materialized enough or concreted or gross enough to be a planet. Again, I may add that each reïmbodiment of a planet, or rather of a planetary chain, passes again or anew through these various phases, to wit: planetary nebula, planetary comet, planetary sun, and planet.

What we call the Milky Way is already prepared world-stuff, both the luminous nebulae as well as the dark: different phases of already prepared world-stuff. You have an analogy in the human body, but of course this is not a lecture-hall on physiology, so I cannot go into that very easily.

Now then, when the time comes for a solar system to reïmbody itself in the same way as a man

reincarnates, a certain portion of this world-stuff which has ended its pralaya, or rather the pralaya of the former sun, detaches itself from the Milky Way and begins to pursue at first a slow and later a rapid peregrination as a comet into many portions of the galaxy, finally to reach its own destined home in space. Always keep in mind that it does this because drawn by attractions, which is really gravitation: psychic, spiritual, intellectual attractions. This nebula moves slowly at first, but gathers speed. It picks up material as it wanders through the galaxy, traversing the different solar systems: and if it is fortunate and escapes being drawn into the stomach of one or another of the always very hungry suns (strange way to speak of imbodyed divinities!) then it finds its place in space, and its movement of translation stops. It has other movements in common with all galactic bodies; but its cometary wanderings, the cometary wanderings of the 'long-haired radical' as H. P. B. calls the comet, stops because it has found its home, its locus. It then settles and is now much more concrete, much less spiritual, much less astral, as we say, than it was as a nebula, because time has passed, ages have passed during which it was a comet: and furthermore it has been gathering material, the 'refuse of the mother,' the detritus of the cosmic dust, her breath, her refuse, which it has been feeding on and taking into itself. Strange paradox that in all the rūpa-worlds entities feed — not so in the arūpa. There their food is intellectual ambrosia or nectar, as the Greeks said of their Olympian divinities.

Now when it has thus settled in the place which is the locus of the solar system rebodyed, the solar system that was, and more or less in that same place (karman you see), the nebula or comet has become a vast lens or disk-shaped body of astral stuff — call it nebular matter, call it cometary matter if you will — with laya-centers here and there scattered through it, like organs in a body. We may call these laya-centers by the more common name in science and say that they are the nuclei. In the center is the largest such nucleus which grows or develops or evolves into becoming a sun. The smaller nuclei around it in this nebular comet or cometary nebula grow to be the beginnings of the planets, and this is the beginning of the solar system. In the commencement of its beginning, as it were, the sun is voracious and attempts to swallow his younger brothers the planets, until the laws of nature come into operation, and attraction and repulsion come into play, of which science today knows only one: attraction, and calls it gravity or gravitation, although it seems to me repulsion is just as active in the universe as gravity. To me this gravity-theory is one-sided. If you will consider the behavior of the comets which come into the solar system, and how the tail of the comet always points away from the sun, you will see repulsion at work. Scientists

think the repulsion is due to the action of light on the very small particles of molecules in the cometary tail. If you like. It is repulsion. As the comet approaches the sun, the head goes first, and tail afterwards; then as it sweeps around, the tail is always heading away from the sun, and when it leaves the sun after circling it, the tail precedes and the head follows.

Now the solar system is thus brought into being and finally becomes that solar system as we see it with our eyes. That means a lot, that phrase, *with our eyes*; and soon the solar system begins its career as a now formed entity. The planets slowly become more material and less ethereal. The divine laws of the celestial mechanism we call the solar system are established as now we see them working.

Now we pass over ages and we come to the ending of the life of the sun, which means the ending of the life of the solar system, for the sun is King in his kingdom. The sun feeds on the refuse of interplanetary and inter-solar stuffs which it sucks in with its immense force and rejects as we humans do. This is the body of the sun I am talking about. This refuse, this matter in cosmic space, is the detritus of former dead suns, as you will see in a moment. Now we are approaching the end of the life of the sun. The sun's powers begin to weaken. Actually what is happening is that his manvantara is ending, his pralaya is almost beginning. His life on inner planes is opening, and that takes vitality from this plane. Therefore we say the sun is weakening in his power. That is all it means, and that is all death is: the transference from this plane to interior planes of a large part of the vitality existing on this plane when the body is at full strength.

Finally the sun dies. But long before this all the planets have died and have disappeared. I cannot tell you where here, it would take too long. Sufficient to say that the sun knows. The sun when the moment of its death comes bursts, explodes, into simply innumerable fragments of various sizes, sun-stuff, which originally were almost as ethereal as spirit; but as the sun grew older became more and more compacted, more and more materialized, concreted, until when the sun is dying, practically dead, it is not a solid body yet but on the way to becoming solid. But it explodes; there is a tremendous — words just lack to explain this — not flash, a tremendous volume or outburst of light and power spreading throughout our solar system, and far beyond its confines. Every now and then astronomers today will discover what they call novae, a Latin word meaning "new stars." But what they see is just the opposite: a death of a star; and they will see some of these novae expand and then actually dim, some very quickly, some requiring years and years.

Now then, all these fragments which were once sun-stuff grow constantly more material. Finally they

become the meteors and meteorites of interstellar spaces. Originally spirit-stuff, mulaprakriti, they are now some of the most solid portions of prakriti, iron, nickel, carbon, and all the other things that our scientists have found in the meteorites which have reached this earth. These meteorites wander through space for ages and ages until the imbodiment of the solar system comes again. Thus the cometary nebula picks up uncounted numbers of these meteorites, thus bringing back as it were its life-atoms of the former body of the solar system into its new body, just as we humans do. But it takes ages and ages for the solar system to gather up all these meteorites; and as a matter of fact all the meteorites that traverse our solar system are not due to the explosion of our former sun. Multitudes and multitudes of them are, but multitudes are not, but are the explosions of other suns in interstellar space which have wandered far and have become caught by our sun in its former state, or by our planets in their former state.

And one final thing: We have thus seen what a sun-comet is, or a comet which becomes a sun in the solar system. But a comet may be the pre-birth state either of a sun or of a planet. During the lifetime of a solar system, every one of our planetary chains has its periods of manvantara and pralaya, in other words every planetary chain dies and is imbodied again, and dies and is imbodied again in our system before the solar system and the sun in that system reach the time of their pralaya. In other words, our planetary chains re embody themselves many many times during the lifetime or manvantara of our solar system. How is this done? The chains die, their inner principles begin their peregrinations along the circulations of the universe, exactly as a man's ego dies and returns. Remember I am just giving the barest outline, just a touch here and a touch there, leaving out 99 percent of what should and could be said. How does each such planetary chain-ego, as it were, come back to our solar system? By detaching itself where it was resting as part of the already prepared world-stuff of the Milky Way exactly as the sun-comet or cometary sun did when the solar system was re embodying. In this instance the comet is a planetary comet which wanders through space, comes back to our solar system, is attracted here, becomes a small sun, and dying out of this state because of materializing, becomes a full planetary chain, settles in life as what we call the planet and begins its new Day of Brahmā.

VOICE WITHIN THE WORD

The wise of every age have shown that within the written word are meanings obscured by the formalisms of language. We are presently enduring a social pox erupting in a barrage of cant, slogans, and "specialized"

jargon, often deliberately designed to prevent understanding. Such language suffuses the mind with unwanted images, blocking the liberating power of ideas. Lewis Lapham, an editor sensitive to the plastic coating misused language places over thought, has returned to *Harper's*. He writes in the May issue:

On first opening a book I listen for the sound of the human voice. By this device I am absolved from reading much of what is published in a given year. Most writers make use of institutional codes (academic, literary, political, bureaucratic, technical), in which they send messages already deteriorating into the half-life of yesterday's news. Their transmissions remain largely unintelligible, and unless I must decipher them for professional reasons, I am content to let them pass by. I listen instead for a voice in which I can hear the music of the human improvisations as performed through 5,000 years on the stage of recorded time. . . . If within the first few pages I cannot hear the author's voice — no matter if he promises to introduce me to the court of Cyrus or the inner councils of the Democratic Party — I abandon him at the first convenient opportunity.

What may be at fault, Lapham says, is that during this age, due to the "wonders of science," writers are intimidated and cannot locate a plausible image of man. "In much of what falls under the rubric of modern literature I hear little more than the quarreling of the faculty in a university English department." But when man is not depicted as a "machine," authors with imagination instill the "human voice" within nature and do not "retreat behind the walls of dogma." He continues:

The ancient authors, at least those among them who remain in print, seem less frightened of the world. They approached the study of man as if he were a universe unto himself, so vast and so mysterious as to defy the promulgation of doctrine and the making of smaller mystifications to conceal the fear of an empty stage. Having learned to admire the spaciousness of Montaigne, I have come to think that the most astonishing books are those that I can open at random.

— *Theosophy*, 'On The Lookout',
United Lodge of Theosophists, August 1984

LETTER FROM BOMBAY

It was hot when we were in Bombay. While there we witnessed the rare phenomenon which took place on March 21. We came to know about it from the newspapers. The Sun *and* the Moon both rose and set at the same time that day — and such a phenomenon occurs only once in 12 thousand years. Did your papers have anything about this?

I took the boys to the Fire-Temple to see the priest performing a very brief ceremony of "changing of the geh". It was very interesting. Since ancient times, since the days of the Magis, a day was divided into 5 parts according to the path of the Sun, and it

was based on certain astronomical and occult occurrences. At certain times the Sun produces certain new vibrations, called "stoat" (it's hard to put this into English) and this creates certain influences on our atmosphere. At such 5 appointed times, each day, the Priest in his full flowing white garb enters the Inner chamber where the Fire is enthroned (no one else is permitted to step inside), and after reciting certain prayers (mantras), he symbolically makes himself the magnet to draw the beneficiary power of the Upper Realms to this sphere. He holds a "chamuch" (a rod with which he tends the fire) in one hand, and with the other hand he rings the bell 9 times. He forms a link between the Fire and the Bell. He rings it 9 times because, according to our cosmogony, [Parsiism] there are 9 heavens or "aalems," the 10th being Boundless. Each of these heavens has a corresponding physical body (instead of 7, our philosophy numbers the bodies of Man as 9 — 3 Immortal, 3 semi-, and 3 mortal) and with each ring the Priest draws the beneficiary powers of each heaven to its corresponding body and dispels any harmful effects.

In addition to these regular 5 geh, the period of 36 minutes before sunrise each day is allotted separately — known as "hoshbam". . . . The boys will remember the ceremony for a long, long time.

—PERVIN MISTRY

X: QUESTIONS — YOUR ANSWERS

We now reach No. 10 in our study of the Theosophical Manuals, *The Astral Light: Nature's Amazing Picture Gallery*. This is written by Dr. Henry Travers Edge, one of HPB's personal pupils. — ED.

I. INTRODUCTORY

1. Why in this study is the category known as the 'supernatural' rejected?

II. MEANING OF THE TERM 'ASTRAL LIGHT'

1. In a division of 3 — spirit-soul-body — what relates to the Astral Light? What is its relation to the physical plane? (pp. 4-5)

III. SCIENTIFIC VIEWS

1. What examples can you give supporting the idea that there is an astral body within the physical which remains unchanged while the physical changes? (pp. 9-10)

IV. A COSMIC PICTURE GALLERY

1. What in your own words is the Astral Light? (p. 11)
2. How does existence of the Astral Light indicate that no thought, word, deed, event, or emotion, can ever really be lost? (p. 11)
3. Why, esoterically (or even scientifically) is it impossible to 'sin in secret', or for that matter

do good, without eventual influence from the astral light? (p. 13)

V. THE ASTRAL LIGHT AND KARMA

1. Why can a knowledge of the Astral Light supply us with some missing links in our understanding of Nature? (pp. 14-15)
2. Is karma a blind mechanistic process? Explain. How many 'planes' does it act on? How many 'planes' has the astral light? (pp. 15-16)
3. What part does an 'elemental' play in our acts and the workings of karma? (pp. 16-17)

VI. DANGERS OF THE LOWER ASTRAL LIGHT

1. What is the lowest stratum of the Astral Light and what composes it? (p. 18)
2. Is it wise to seek to open up communication with the astral plane or its denizens? Who alone can withstand its dangers? (pp. 19-20)

VII. THE ASTRAL LIGHT AND EVOLUTION

1. Where does the change take place where one type of organism passes into another? Explain. (pp. 21-22)

VIII. THE ASTRAL LIGHT AND ETHER

1. What phenomena in nature are given more enlightened scientific explanation by a knowledge of the astral light? (p. 24)
2. Does the mental and moral condition of a people affect our physical world? (p. 25)

IX. THE ASTRAL LIGHT AND HISTORY

1. How can 'psychic waves' in a historical sense be explained by action from the astral light? (pp. 28-29)

X. DENIZENS OF THE ASTRAL LIGHT

1. Is there any 'plane' of Nature unpeopled with 'living beings'? (p. 30)
2. What are some of the denizens of the lower astral light? (pp. 31-32)
3. How are elementals connected with our human habits? (pp. 33-34)

XI. SOCIAL INFLUENCE OF THE ASTRAL LIGHT

1. How may epidemics be connected with the astral light? (pp. 35-36)
2. Is heredity exclusively physical? Enlarge on this. (p. 39)

XII. PSYCHIC PHENOMENA, APPARITIONS, ETC.

1. Do astral 'time' and physical 'time' always gear together? (p. 41)

XIII. CONCLUDING REMARKS

1. Do the cosmic principles of the universe lie one above the other in layers? Explain. (pp. 44-45)

APPENDIX. Have you any questions after reading the quotations in the Appendix? (pp. 46-55)

THE POOL THAT LOST ITSELF

H. Percy Leonard

A little pool among the boulders on the beach lay warming itself in the sunshine. A gentle breeze rippled its surface, and tiny wavelets softly lapped upon the margin of the basin where it lay. "There is my little kingdom," thought the pool every time one of its wavelets broke upon its boundary line. Other pools lay in sight, and it was pleasant to compare its ample size, its graceful contour, and its flashing surface, with the lesser attractions of the neighboring pools.

Far down the beach lay the ocean, a vast pool which seemed to have no boundaries and whose immeasurable range terrified the timid little pool lying in its petty isolation, behind the guardian ramparts which protected it from all association with its kind. "Here in solitary splendor I shall lie for ever," it mused, "shielded from all contamination with inferior pools and widely separated by a sloping stretch of sand from that appalling ocean whose rhythmic murmurs sound so faint and far away."

Small fish and gray shrimps darted to and fro about its shallows, and it was pleasant to feel itself the patron and protector of these small fry, and to reign as a monarch without a rival in its little kingdom.

The sun grew hotter, and mounted the blue arch overhead, while the murmur of the distant waves grew louder as the time went by. "What would become of me if the waves should ever flood the beach?" thought the little pool. "My beautiful, clear water would be mixed with the other pools, and one and all would be engulfed in that vast ocean whose waves sound louder and louder."

The tide was surely creeping up the beach. The long, blue breakers glided to the front and broke in thunder thereon. The liquid ruins were drawn back over the rattling pebbles; but always rose again with added volume and a louder roar. The pool trembled at the thought of its approaching destruction, until at last one towering billow, breaking loose from the tossing multitude, fell headlong with a sounding roar, poured its white cataract of boiling foam into the pool, and floated it away to mingle with the mighty deep.

No longer capable of thinking as a pool, an exultant surge of feeling soon drowned all sense of separated life. Its outlines melted in immensity. It had become the boundless sea itself. The petty throbbing of its individual life took on the grander rhythm of the ocean's giant heart. The breaking up of the limits of personal existence was the moment of its triumphant entry into the larger life, just as the man who loses himself in serving his fellows, grows suddenly great, and finds himself one with the Heart of the Universe.

— *The Theosophical Forum*, March, 1936

THE DOCTRINE OF THE "I" or: A STUDY IN SCHOLASTIC SOPHISTRY

John Drais

In response to our editorial comment introducing Dr. Daniel van Egmond's review of the *Proceedings: Symposium on H. P. Blavatsky's 'Secret Doctrine,'* July 21-22, 1984, several letters have been received which we are including in this issue. In publishing these, it is not our intention to labor in our bi-monthly points of disagreement, but when contributions sometimes touch on varying viewpoints of understanding of the teachings of Theosophy, it is perhaps well to air them, and from this sharing maybe we can all learn. No doubt, however, remains in our mind that the very fact of calling an international conference on *The Secret Doctrine* for the first time since that book was published in 1888, was, and will be regarded worldwide as, a happening of outstanding and significant importance in theosophical history. To be followed by a similar Conference to be held at Launceston, Tasmania in mid-January of next year (for which a Call for Papers has been issued), is natural tribute to the soundness of the idea. On that one point, we feel sure, all Theosophists will agree, and the impregnation of that thought alone into our thought-world far exceeds lesser criticism, no matter how well intended.

As the following reply is written in the form of an article and longer than the others received, we give it here. Other replies are included in the section "From Letters Received."
— W.E.S.

The September/October issue of the *E.T.* offered its readers a rare treat. Not often in its pages are found what perhaps best can be called 'perfidious beauty', the fruit of the "Hall of Learning," concerning which HPB in *The Voice of the Silence* cautions: "Beware, Lanoo, lest dazzled by illusive radiance thy Soul should linger and be caught in its deceptive light." (*Fragment I*). Daniel van Egmond's classic example, published as a book review of *Proceedings: Symposium on H. P. Blavatsky's 'Secret Doctrine'* is indeed fraught with sophistic "flapdoodles."

"Now I have passed in review nearly all contributions, and again I regret to give utterance to my sorrow . . ." he concludes. Now, actually, he "passed in review" but eight of the seventeen contributions! Such an hyperbole is certainly silly, as the following critical analysis reveals. Of the total forty-three sentences in his review, fifteen are devoted to himself (eleven to the Introduction and four to the closing.) The remaining twenty-eight are distributed as follows: two for Hannon and Hao-Chin together; three each for Coulsting and Maddock; two each for Eklund and Dubbink; nine for McDavid; and seven for Titchenell. Scattered liberally throughout these forty-three sentences there are no less than seven "I"s, two "my"s, seven "we"s and one "our own". Seventeen expressions of Dr. van E.'s "I" Doctrine.

As if this were not enough, under guise of theosophical scholasticism he foists on his readers several glaring errors, thus adding insult to injury. "If we take, as a starting point, that a serious study of the 'S.D.' finally should lead to new insights . . .", he premises. And if we do not, as indeed we did not --

since a request for "new insights" (*sic*) was nowhere in the "Syllabus and Call for Papers" published in many "important theosophical magazines" — then D. van E.'s criticisms become fatuous from the outset. Nonetheless, and perhaps because of the 'serpents coiled beneath the flowers', (*V. of S.*) three 'blooms' will be picked.

(1) Concerning new insights: D. van E.'s Doctrine of the "I" states "... only one contribution answers this requirement, viz. Henk Dubbink's . . ." D. van E. has apparently not passed beyond the "Hall of Ignorance," for certainly HPB did not need the "exact analysis" of Dubbink to show that "... Theosophy and Neo-Platonism are indeed shoots of one branch . . .". Indeed, D. van E. contradictorily admits this himself by completing this last sentence with "... as H.P.B. taught." In fact, as Dubbink says, "Now my hypothesis is: the 'Dzyu' or 'Dgyu' is identical with 'rgyu' . . ." (see Symposium *Proceedings*, p. 51).

(2 and 3) The two 'blooms' remaining relate to D. van E.'s "I" Doctrine of Myths and the Law of Analogy. They are plucked from Titchenel's and McDavid's presentations, and will be discussed here together as D. van E.'s misunderstanding of the field of mythos is closely related to his misapplication of the Law of Analogy and his materialistic conception of psychology. The Law of Analogy is fully stated in the *Smaragdine Table* of Hermes Trismegistus:

True without error, certain and most true; that which is above is as that which is below, and that which is below is as that which is above, for performing the miracles of the One Thing. And as all things were from One, by the mediation of One, so all things proceeded from this One Thing by Adaptation . . .

And here HPB speaks:

The Law of Analogy in the plan of structure between the trans-Solar systems and the intra-Solar planets, does not necessarily bear upon the finite conditions to which every visible body is subject, in this our plane of being. In Occult Science this law is the first and most important key to Cosmic physics . . . — (S.D.I, 150)

And again:

From *Gods to men*, from Worlds to Atoms, from the Sun to the vital heat of the meanest organic being — the world of Form and Existence is an immense chain, whose links are all connected . . . and these links have to be studied co-ordinately in their occult relations to each other. — (*Op. cit.* I, 604)

That which takes place on the spiritual plane repeats itself on the Cosmic plane. — (*Op. cit.* I, 177)

It thus becomes apparent how perfect is the analogy between the processes of Nature in the Kosmos and in the individual man Analogy is thus the surest guide to the comprehension of the Occult teachings. — (*Op. cit.* I, 173)

Mythos, as with all other subjects must, therefore, apply equally to Kosmology as to Cosmology, psychology as to physiology; and numerous passages from the *S.D.* could be repeated here, if space

permitted, in demonstration. How then can D. van E. so blatantly state: "According to H.P.B. myths have neither a psychological nor a cosmological meaning, because in the first place myths refer to the Kosmos which transcends the difference between psyche and nature"? The only possible response to this incredible "I" Doctrine is *How utterly absurd!*

In relation to McDavid's synoptic comparison "Science and The Secret Doctrine," D. van E.'s "I" Doctrine 'bloom-the-third' goes from bad to worse. "... similar superficial resemblances actually offer nothing From this we can learn that it is dangerous to see all kinds of parallels — which has been proved by 'the' science of today . . ." Not only does D. van E. ignore the rest of McDavid's title ("Some Interesting Parallels . . . and Some Important Differences"), he also flippantly ignores, and thereby purposely distorts, explicit warnings concerning the exactness of scientific opinion and the grossness of its field of study.

Rather than test the patience of *E.T.* readers further, a poignant quote from "The Two Paths" should be sufficient for those who would pass to the "Hall of Wisdom": "Self gratulation, O disciple, is like unto a lofty tower, up which a haughty fool has climbed. Thereon he sits in prideful solitude and unperceived by any but himself." — (*V. of S. Fragment II*).

IN MEMORY OF D.J.P. KOK

As reported in our last *Eclectic*, Dick Kok passed into peace last June 17, 1985. We have since received from Herman Vermeulen, an assistant and co-worker of Mr. Kok's for many years, the following biographical sketch which we publish *in extenso*. — ED.

D.J.P. Kok was born March 16, 1915, in The Hague, Holland. His parents were pioneers in the Movement that, in the first part of the twentieth century, worked for the improvement of the situation of the lowest and poorest classes in society. Even as a child, when prominent members of this Movement frequently met at his parents' house, he would follow their philosophical and practical discussions.

Because of his great social sympathies, he very soon became active in this Movement. In this work he came to realize, just as in her time Katherine Tingley did during her charity-work in the slums, that a real change in society is not brought about by merely improving the material situation of men, but by changing their mentality; and political ideologies will never be able to succeed in this; what is needed is a philosophy of life that does not demand any blind faith, but gives logical answers on all life's questions.

From this realization, which has governed the rest of his life, he started to investigate very critically all kinds of trends; subsequently in the dark years of the Second World War, in 1943, he came into contact with Theosophy, in which he found the philosophy he had been searching for. During this time Theosophy and theosophical literature were prohibited by the German occupation-government in Holland, and the — clandestine — theosophical activities took place disguised as studies of the Bible, the works of Shakespeare, the philosophy

of Plato etc. For three years he thus studied Theosophy. After the War he became a probationary Member of The Theosophical Society — Point Loma/Covina (March 31, 1946, diploma signed by J.H. Venema) and a full Member on July 30, 1946 (diploma signed by A.L. Conger).

Shortly after this he began to give lectures on Theosophy, and soon this became his principal activity. The reason for the success and great inspirational power of his lectures lay — once again — in his great social sympathies, which made him, in his presentation of Theosophy choose to accentuate what the man in the street could do with the theosophical teachings in his daily problems and expectations in life. It was this direct and distinctly practical approach, in which he strongly emphasized altruism and the necessity of inner and social reform, that made his lectures and explanations of the teachings so popular with his audience. Everyone, young or old, rich or poor, found in them a clear guidance for the application of Theosophy in their daily life. He had the talent to resolve Theosophy into its principles and to expose these in simple and easily understandable words: a quality also found in the two courses he wrote, "Thinking Differently" and "Wisdom of Life", which both served greatly to increase the membership of The Theosophical Society.

In 1951, during the very difficult period for The Theosophical Society at the end of the life of its fifth Leader Arthur L. Conger, D.J.P. Kok very definitely made the choice for the man A.L. Conger himself had appointed as his successor: William Hartley. Because of the great confusion in those days, the fact that so many members lacked the power of discrimination, and the manipulations of J. Long, the theosophical activities in Holland had practically come to an end. It was one of the great merits of D.J.P. Kok, that he, together with a very small number of fellow-theosophists, started from the beginning to rebuild the work. In the years that followed he had extensive correspondence with William Hartley, during which it was suggested he would look after the affairs of the T.S. in Europe. In 1958, three years after the death of William Hartley, the Chairman of the Leader's Cabinet Mrs. Helen G. Steward called him to California, where he was asked to assume the leadership of The Theosophical Society, under the condition that no publicity would be given to this fact. It was not until 1963 that, after a second visit to Mrs. Steward, his succession was made public.

One of his first activities was the founding of a legal body as part of The Theosophical Society: the International Study-centre for Independent Search for truth, (I.S.I.S.), in order to prohibit any future malpractice with the possessions of The Theosophical Society as had taken place in 1951. I.S.I.S. also served as a basis for all propagational activities, the publishing of theosophical books etc.

He further wrote the two courses "Thinking Differently" and "Wisdom of Life". He wrote them in his special style: he never demanded any purely intellectual qualities of the student (no *intellectual* previous knowledge of technical theosophical teachings and metaphysical Sanskrit-terms is required for the courses), but he always appealed strongly to the student's intuition and discriminating faculty (the student himself has to test and to prove, by giving examples, the truth — or fallacy — of the lessons). The first course is meant as an introduction to the basic principles of Theosophy, while in the second course the Seven Jewels of Wisdom are studied. Both courses were and still are held in several places in Holland; they have also been translated into German and English and are held in that form as correspondence courses.

A landmark in the long line of his activities was the purchase of the Blavatskyhouse in 1970. With this he gave The Theosophical Society again its International Headquarters, a center from which it could operate. The Blavatskyhouse func-

tions as a focus where, nationally and internationally, the courses, public lectures and all other contacts are coordinated. In 1973 the decision was made to buy the house next to the Blavatskyhouse, where a theosophical printing department was set up, run by unpaid voluntary Theosophists, to make, print and publish theosophical literature, programs and posters for the lectures, and — since 1979 — the magazine *Lucifer*.

For many years he spent his leisure time, after his normal daily work as an official in the government of The Hague, promulgating Theosophy: weekly he conducted the study-meetings of several Lodges and the two courses, and monthly he gave six or seven public lectures, four of which were in the Blavatskyhouse: some 90 evenings each study-season! Twice he had television-interviews, many times he was interviewed by newspapers and magazines. He wrote articles in *Theosophical Life* and later his editorial articles in *Lucifer*. He also wrote the following books: nine little volumes *Theosophical Fragments*, *The Great Misunderstanding*, *Guardians of Humanity*, *Life on Mars?!*, *On Life and Death*, *Euthanasia* and the pamphlet *Theosophy and Education*.

After being pensioned in 1980, he spent his daily working-hours on theosophical work: on the translation of the books of Gottfried de Purucker. Meanwhile, as he realized that because of ill-health he had only a short time left, he trained and instructed his nearest co-workers to take over his tasks in the work; which actually was done by them during the last six months of his life.

His great devotion to the theosophical work, his great financial and organizing talents, his personal self-sacrifice, the strict discipline he demanded of himself and of his nearest co-workers — after he had urgently warned them of the consequences of working for Theosophy: those were the principles that made him such a great stimulating power in The Theosophical Society. His greatest power, however, was his vision of the future of the Theosophical Movement, his conviction that there could only be a future for it if the theosophical fundamental principles, as found in *The Secret Doctrine* were kept pure and would be passed on unaltered to next generations. It was this vision that he passed on to his nearest co-workers and that he always made his main — uncompromising — principle in every cooperation with other Theosophists and theosophical organizations.

He always said: "The Theosophical Society does not need members; it needs workers!" Therefore we can rightly conclude this brief history of his life with the title of the article in his magazine *Lucifer* in which his death was announced: "DORMIT IN ASTRIS . . . and — thanks to workers like him, who had the power to inspire, to teach, and to train others — the Work goes on."

FROM LETTERS RECEIVED

The following letters have been received in response to our editorial comment introducing Dr. Daniel van Egmond's review of the *Proceedings: Symposium on H.P. Blavatsky's 'Secret Doctrine'*, July 21-22, 1984. — Ed.

From W.R. Laudahn, Ojai, California, 93023, (117 Taormina Lane):

Responding to your editorial request for comments on Daniel van Egmond's review of *The Secret Doctrine* symposium: He probably stepped on many toes. His review was to the point. Van Egmond exposed the shallow nature of much that passes, presently, for Theosophy. Especially interesting was his

statement that the background of HPB's teachings corresponds with those of Neo-Platonism. In *The Key to Theosophy* she praised those precepts, derived from Ammonius Saccas and Plotinus, as "The Eclectic Theosophical System." Many people still believe that Theosophy dates from 1875!

Following the Adepts, Plotinus and Blavatsky point to the "one reality" behind the "world of shadows." On the other hand, the so-called "later writers" (headed by Leadbeater) tend to depart from this. They are famous for detailed descriptions of the "astral plane." It amounts to a materialization of the astral. Interesting as this might be, it falls far short of the One. Fortunately for us and for the One, it is not easy to go into details about THAT!

L. Gordon Plummer, La Mesa, Calif., 92041 (5480 Marengo Dr. #351):

Coming to the question about the similarity of the atom to the Solar System, it is recognized today that while this appeared valid in the days of Eddington, Jeans, and other advanced scientists of the 1920's I believe that had the early astronomers of those days known what has since been learned about atomic structure they would not have propounded the idea just in that way. I must agree with our worthy critic that one cannot draw similarities between Science and Esotericism, and for this reason: while the inner life of either Man or the Universe is the ultimate cause of the outward manifestations of that life, the descriptions of the operations of consciousness cannot be studied in the same terms as physics and chemistry. The two cannot be equated.

From the standpoint of a student of the Esoteric Philosophy we might say, however, that there is a possibility — but a possibility only — that the amazing structure of the atom as it is now understood might give some clues as to the inner structure of the Solar System. Science, knowing nothing of what in Theosophy are called Globe Chains, and the peregrinations of the Monads through worlds visible and invisible, can offer nothing that would indicate parallel patterns in the operations of entities here on the Earth and higher entities that are studied in terms of the vaster ranges of consciousness of those higher beings H.P.B. deals with in her writings.

There is every reason for employing the capital K in referring to the cosmical planes of consciousness, and the small C in referring to the planes of consciousness as they relate to the structure of the Earth with its relatively restricted ranges of consciousness. We make a mistake if we think that the Planes of Consciousness spelled with a K are something 'way up there', and those spelled with the C are 'down here'. Every plane of consciousness spelled with a K is composed of its own sub-planes, all of which are spelled with the C. Thus, those Cosmical planes in and

through which our Earth Cain functions comprise in their totality one of the Kosmical Planes. All the other Kosmical Planes are in their turn composed of sub-planes which we call, as a means of identifying them, the Cosmical Planes.

It becomes obvious that the same laws of Nature apply in their appropriate magnitudes to all the planes of consciousness. This, however, does not affirm nor even imply that details are similar on all the planes, as this would be absurd. The unity of life throughout the Universe cannot be excluded from any part of it.

If the worthy critic deems himself well equipped to enter upon the study the lack of which he deplures, I would like to see him write a contribution to the next SD Convention that would stand as a beacon for all other less informed students.

Judith Ann Christie, Yorba Linda, Calif. 92696 (Box 666):

In reading the Review by Daniel van Egmond of THE SECRET DOCTRINE Symposium Papers I was minded of some words by H.P. Blavatsky. In *Isis Unveiled* (II, 409) she states:

Zoroaster was called a Manthran, or speaker of Mantras, and, according to Haug, one of the earliest names for the Sacred Scriptures of the Parsis was the Manthraspenta. The power and significance of the Brahman who acts as the Hotri-priest at the Soma-Sacrifice, consists in his possession and full knowledge of the uses of the sacred word or speech — Vach. The latter is personified in Sarasvati, the wife of *Brahmā*, who is the goddess of the sacred or 'Secret Knowledge'. She is usually depicted as riding upon a peacock with its tail all spread. The eyes upon the feathers of the bird's tail symbolize the sleepless eyes that see all things. To one who has the ambition of becoming an adept of the 'Secret doctrines', they are a reminder that he must have the hundred eyes of Argus to see and comprehend all things.

Now, who amongst us, I ask, possesses the hundred eyes of Argus that see all things? In the above paragraph note also that HPB refers to the "Secret doctrines" in plural tense. Is it just possible that she speaks of the Secret doctrines within the body of *The Secret Doctrine*?

This brief comment is neither a criticism of the gentleman who wrote the review nor a defense of the writers of the papers of the S.D. Symposium or its conductors. It is obvious that all students have different ways of viewing Truth, but the critic must indeed be Argus-eyed to be able to judge in fulness the various expositions of that Truth.

ITEMS OF INTEREST AND NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Conventions and More Conventions

The 110th International Convention of the Theosophical Society will be held at Adyar, Madras, India, December 26-31,

1985.

The Third Indo-Pacific Conference will be held at Karachi, Pakistan, 12-15 December 1985. Guest Speaker will be the International President, Mrs. Radha Burnier. The theme for the Conference is: "Universal Values: The Way to Peace and Fulfilment."

The 1986 National Convention of the T.S. in Australia, will be held January 18-25th, 1986, on the banks of the Tamar River on the outskirts of Launceston, Tasmania. January 19th and 20th will be reserved for a two-day Symposium on "The Secret Doctrine". Guest speaker for both the Convention and the Symposium is Miss Jeanine Miller of England. "Original papers on personal research into the many and varied aspects of *The Secret Doctrine*" (of twenty minutes duration) will be presented. These must be in English as no translators will be available. *Theosophy in Australia* (June quarter 1985) states that the "staging of this symposium has been inspired by the 'Symposium on *The Secret Doctrine*' held at San Diego, California, U.S.A. on July 21st-22nd, 1984, by the Continuum Foundation and Wizards Bookshelf."

Vigor in England

Lectures, Seminars and Study Groups at London Headquarters, as well as Residential Study weekends at Tekels Park, and Federation activities in the provinces, reported in *The Theosophical Journal*, Sept.-Oct. 1985, attest to the vigor of the programs in England. Titles of some of the lectures: The Study of the Upanishads (Leader, Ianthe Hoskins); "The Secret Doctrine: Aspects of Evolution" (Leaders, Geoffrey A. Farthing, Rose Lynch, Alan Hughes). "Some Aspects of the Secret Doctrine" seminar led by G. Farthing, a Federation seminar at the London Hqtrs.

Some Interesting Articles

In *The Theosophist* (Adyar): "Karma and Its Use for Man" by N. Muthuswamy; and "The Cry of Humanity" by G.K.R. Patri (March 1985); "The One as Many: The Many As One" by Virginia Hanson (February 1985); "On Paradoxical Interpretations of Cosmogony" by John Gordon (Oct. 1984); and "Some Developments in Christian Thought" by Leslie Price, editor of the just born *Theosophical History* (Aug. 1984).

In "*Theosophy in Australia*, September 1985 quarter: "Bearers of the Light", a Talk Given at the National Convention at Canberra, January 1985, by Dianne Hames, treating of Hermes Trismegistus, The Divine Pyramider, Orpheus, Pythagoras and his Teachings, Ammonius Saccas and the Alexandrian School. And by Dianne K. Kynaston, Gen. Sec. TS in Australia, "H.P. Blavatsky — a Theosophical Alchemist".

Krotona School of Theosophy Begins New School Year

On opening day the speaker was Dr. Willis Harman, President of the Institute of Noetic Sciences, professor at Stanford University, author of *An Incomplete Guide to the Future*.

Other speakers at seminars are: Dr. Ralph Hannon, Chairman for the Theosophical Research Institute and co-editor of *The Theosophical Research Journal*, his subject: "Crisis, Chaos, Entropy: a Theosophical Perspective." Dr. Henry Skolimowski, "Mind and the Becoming of the Universe"; Michael Miles gives a "spiritual and psychological look at a number of fairy tales and Mystery Traditions in seminars titled "Once Upon a Time". Joy Mills continues her "Studies in The Secret Doctrine", and with Virginia Hanson as resource person, the Thursday evening class continues its study of *The Mahatma Letters*.

Mundy's OM in Holland

The following is a Review by Nederlandse Bibliotheek

Dienst (Dutch Library Service), The Hague, Holland, of OM: *The Secret of Ahbor Valley* by Talbot Mundy. Stichting I.S.I.S., Blavatskyhuis, De Ruyterstraat 74, 2518 AV The Hague, Holland, is the publisher of this Dutch translation, and orders for the book should go directly to them.

"The British colonial official and secret agent Ommony certainly unravels more than one secret. In this he is helped by many colorful personages and a trained dog, but above all by the Tibetan lama Tsiang Samdup. This lama also gives him an insight into his own life-task and into the destiny of humanity in general. In fact the lama puts forth the Theosophical doctrine of Blavatsky (disclosed to her by mysterious Tibetan teachers).

"It is a genuinely thrilling story; the author gives a fascinating picture of India under British government, and the Theosophical wisdom is never obtrusively forced on the reader. Detective stories with a philosophical, historical strain are very popular now (the 'The Name of the Rose'—effect?), as well as Oriental and/or esoteric wisdom. As the book can also simply be read as a thriller, it will appeal to readers with varied interests. Illustrated with beautiful black/white drawings and wise sayings."

First International Conference on Theosophical History

As stated in our last issue, this will be held July 18-20, 1986, at the London Headquarters of the T.S., 50 Gloucester Place, so there is good time to respond to the general invitation to submit a paper for possible presentation. These may be on any aspect of Theosophical History. The Program Committee asks that Summaries of proposed papers be typed double-spaced and limited to 200 words, and sent to reach them by February 28, 1985. Authors will receive decisions in late March. Full papers when presented should be not more than 30 minutes.

Letters of H.P. Blavatsky to Elliott Coues

An invaluable series that has been running in *The Canadian Theosophist*. The Sept.-Oct. 1985 issue publishes No. XI, with five pages of — well, you must read! Michael Gomes' Notes help you on the way. All these Letters are *verbatim* from original copies held by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

Historic Communal Societies Conference

As we go to press the 12th annual conference of HCS will be in full session at Point Loma, California, hosted by Point Loma Nazarene College. Dr. Donald E. Pitzer, Executive Director, and Raymond V. Shepherd, Jr., President of N.H.C.S.A. (Indiana State University Evansville, Ind.) will be on hand. Members have come from Japan, Israel, and from many universities and communal centers in the USA. Among the many addresses we note: "Facing Death: Perspectives from Communal Societies" (Univ. of Louisville, Kentucky); "Silkville: A Phalanx on the Kansas Frontier" (Univ. of Kansas, Lawrence); "The Centrality of Zion in Early Mormon Communitarianism" (Univ. of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA); and the following slide lectures: "Twenty-five Years of Restoring Hancock Shaker Village" (Pittsburgh, Mass); "The Swedish Colony of Bishop Hill, Illinois and its Restoration"; and "The Icarians of Nauvoo, Illinois, and Their Descendants"; Dr. Dwayne Little of the P.L. Nazarene College will also show slides: "The Theosophical Society at Point Loma, 1897 - 1942"; and representatives of the Theosophical Society (Pasadena) will present papers. Of especial interest to local Theosophists attending will be the address by Brian Taves (University of Southern California): "Philosophy into Popular Fiction: Talbot Mundy and the Point Loma Theosophical Society."

THE INNER GROUP

The Personal Pupils of H.P. Blavatsky (1890 - 91)

A RECONSTRUCTION OF THE TEACHINGS

By

H. J. Spierenburg

With a Short Historical Introduction

by J. H. Dubbink

Publisher's Note for this volume reads:

"No word is needed to introduce to our international readership one who is known today worldwide — H.P. Blavatsky. Nearly a hundred years have passed since her *magnum opus The Secret Doctrine* appeared, and this year, in October 1985, the last volume (XIV) of her Collected Writings was published. But in this present study, a reconstruction of the teachings given by her to her Inner Group in the last months of her life in London in 1890 and 1891, we have something special, something that carries what one might call her last touch, for it was teaching then given only to "the few."

The authors are Dutch students who have been studying H.P.B., and what may be called the philosophy of her predecessors, for more than a quarter of a century. Readers will note and appreciate the academic level of their work in the ways the different versions of the I.G. Minutes have been combined and edited, and in their meticulous Index.

Point Loma Publications, Inc., welcomes this opportunity to present this work to what we feel assured is a receptive public. (Publication date, Dec. 17th, 1985)

212 pages, with a 50-page Cross-reference List to the Sources, hard cover, \$10.00. Order from: Point Loma Publications, Inc., P. O. Box 6507, San Diego, Calif. 92106.

Please Take Note

Beginning January 1986 subscriptions (new and renewals) to *The Eclectic Theosophist* will be raised from \$4.50 to \$5.00. Foreign subscription remains the same: \$5.50 surface, \$7.50 by air.

Increase in costs makes this regrettably necessary. It's a good time, too, to thank so many loyal subscribers who have been "with us" through the years!

CONTRIBUTIONS

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